



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Facing the Future with the Bible – President Ronald Reagan addresses the NRB Convention

Guest(s): Ronald Reagan

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Dr. James Dobson: Welcome to Family Talk, ladies and gentlemen. I am the host of the program, James Dobson. And I have what I think is a treat for our listeners today. We're going to go back in time to hear a speech to the National Religious Broadcasters Convention by a president that I loved, Ronald Wilson Reagan. I had the pleasure of working with him off and on for five years when he was in office. And I was at the White House on his last day as president when he met with his staff for the last time. There's some reasons that he explains why I was there, but I just remember the tears around the East Room on that day. And people loved him, he was a unique human being.

This National Religious Broadcaster speech is only 22 minutes long, but it'll tell you what Ronald Reagan stood for. He made references to God in the Bible and abortion and other things that matter to conservative Christians throughout this brief speech. He was not able to accomplish everything that he intended because he was opposed by the opposition party that blocked his initiatives, especially on abortion and school prayer. But you'll see where his heart was and there's not much doubt about that. With that, here is the 40th president of the United States speaking at the National Religious Broadcasters that's January 31st, 1983. And the audience response speaks for itself.

Speaker 2: The president of the United States.

Ronald Reagan: Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much. Please, you did that. Thank you. Thank you all very much. Ladies and gentlemen, the distinguished guests, thank you all very much. What a wonderful sight you are. Because every year when I come here, when I look out at your warm and caring faces, I get a very special feeling like being born again. There's something else I've been noticing, in a time when recession has gripped our land, your industry, religious broadcasting has enjoyed phenomenal growth. Now there may be some who are frightened by your success, but I'm not one of them.

As far as I'm concerned, the growth of religious broadcasting is one of the most heartening signs in America today. When we realize that every penny of that growth is being funded voluntarily by citizens of every stripe, we see an important truth. It's something that I have been speaking of for quite some time that the American people are hungry for your message because they hungry for

a spiritual revival in this land. When Americans reach out for values of faith, family, and caring for the needy, they're saying we want the Word of God. We want to face the future with the Bible. Facing the future with the Bible that's a perfect theme for your convention.

You might be happy to hear that. I have some good news of my own. Thursday morning at the national prayer breakfast, I will sign a proclamation making 1983 the year of the Bible. Thank you. We're blessed to have its words of strength, comfort, and truth. I'm accused of being simplistic at times with some of the problems that confront us, but I've often wondered within the covers of that single book, are all the answers to all the problems that face us today if we don't look for it. The grass withers, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever.

I hope Americans will read and study the Bible in 1983. It's my firm belief that the enduring values, as I say, presented in its pages have a great meaning for each of us and for our nation. The Bible can touch our hearts, order our minds, refresh our souls. Now I realize it's fashionable in some circles to believe that no one in government should encourage others to read the Bible, that we're told that we'll violate the constitutional separation of church and state established by the founding fathers in the first amendment. Well, it might interest those critics to know that not other than the father of our country, George Washington kissed the Bible at his inauguration. And he also said words to the effect that there could be no real morality in a society without religion.

John Adams called it the best book in the world, and Ben Franklin said the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth that God governs in the affairs of men. Without his concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building, no better than the builders of the Babel. We shall be divided by our little partial local interests. Our projects will be confounded and we ourselves shall become a reproach, a by word down to future ages. So when I hear the first amendment used as a reason to keep the traditional moral values away from policy making, I'm shocked.

The first amendment was not written to protect people and their laws from religious values, it was written to protect those values from government tyranny. I've always believed that this blessed land was set apart in a special way that some divine plan placed this great continent here between the two oceans to be found by people from every corner of the earth. People who had a special love for freedom, the courage to uproot themselves, leave their homeland and friends to come to a strange land. And when coming here, they created something new in all the history of mankind, a country where man is not beholden to government, government is beholden to man.

Now I happen to believe that one way to promote indeed to preserve those traditional values we share is by permitting our children to begin their days the same way the members of the United States Congress do with prayer. The public expression of our faith in God through prayer is fundamental as a part of

our American heritage and a privilege, which should not be excluded from our schools. No one must be forced or pressured to take part in any religious exercise, but neither should the freest country on earth ever have permitted God to be expelled from classroom.

When the Supreme Court ruled that school prayer was unconstitutional almost 21 years ago, I believe it ruled wrong. And when a lower court recently stopped Lubbock, Texas high school students from even holding voluntary prayer meetings on the campus before or after class, it ruled wrong too. Our only hope for tomorrow is in the faces of our children. And we know Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come under me and forbid them not for such as the kingdom of God." Well, last year we tried to pass an amendment that would allow communities to determine for themselves whether voluntary prayers should be permitted in their public schools? And we failed. But I want you to know something, I'm determined to bring that amendment back again and again and again and again until we restore it.

Thank you. We were frustrated on two other fronts last year. There are five million American children attending private schools today because of emphasis on religious values and educational standards. Their families, most of whom are less than \$25,000 a year pay private tuition and they also pay their full share of taxes to fund the public schools. We think they're entitled to relief. So, I want you to know that shortly we'll be sending legislation back up to the hill and we will begin the struggle all over again to secure tuition tax credits for deserving families. There's another struggle we must wage to redress a great national wrong, we must go forward with unity of purpose and will. And let us come together, Christians and Jews let us pray together, march lobby and mobilize every force we have so that we can end the tragic taking of unborn children's lives.

Thank you. Who among us can imagine the excruciating pain the unborn must feel as their lives are snuffed away? And we know medically, they do feel pain. I'm glad that a respect human life bill has already been introduced in Congress by representative Henry Hyde. Not only does this bill strengthen and expand restrictions on abortion financed by tax dollars, it also addresses the problem of infanticide. It makes clear the right of all children, including those who are born handicapped to food and appropriate medical treatment after birth, and it has the full support of this administration.

I know that many well-intentioned sincerely motivated people believe that the government intervention violates a woman's right of choice. And they would be right if there were any proof that the unborn are not living human beings. Medical evidence indicates to the contrary and if that were not enough, how do we explain the survival of babies who are born prematurely? Some very premature. We want believe that the heart didn't start beating until the fifth month, but as medical instrumentation has improved, we've learned the heart was beating long before that. Doesn't the constitutional protection of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness extend to the unborn unless it can be

proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that life does not exist in the unborn. And I believe the burden of proof is on those who would make that point.

I read in the *Washington Post* about a young woman named Victoria. She's with child. And she said, "In this society, we save whales, we save timber wolves and bald eagles and Coke bottles yet everyone wanted me to throw away my baby." Well Victoria's story has a happy ending, her baby will be born. Victoria has received assistance from a Christian couple and from Sav-A-Life, a new Dallas group run by Jim McKee, a concerned citizen who thinks it's important to provide constructive alternatives to abortion. There's hope for America. She remains powerful and a powerful force for good, and it's thanks to the conviction and commitment of people like those who are helping Victoria. They're living the meaning of the two great commandments now should love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might, and thy shall love thy neighbor as thy self.

Each year, government bureaucracy spend bills for problems related to drugs and alcoholism and disease. Has anyone stopped to consider that we might come closer to balancing the budget if all of us simply tried to live up to the 10 commandments and the golden rule? America's heart is strong and its heart is good. I mentioned drugs a moment ago and I hope you'll forgive me if I digress just long enough, because I don't often get the chance to say this publicly, how proud I am of Nancy and the job she's doing helping to fight drug addiction. I do that every day for her.

I know that each of you is contributing in your own way to rebuilding America, and I thank you. As broadcasters, you have unique opportunities. And all of us as Protestants, Catholics, and Jews have a special responsibility to remember our fellow believers who are being persecuted in other lands. We're all children of Abraham, we're children of the same God. You might be interested to know about a few of the changes that we're making at the Voice of America. Our transmissions of Christian and Jewish broadcast are being expanded and improved. This year for the first time in history, the Voice of America broadcast religious service worldwide, Christmas Eve at the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC.

Now these broadcasts are not popular with governments of totalitarian powers, but make no mistake, we have a duty to broadcast. Aleksandr Herzen, the Russian writer warned, "To shrink from saying a word in defense of the oppressed is as bad as any crime." Well, I pledge to you that America will stand up, speak out and defend the values we share. To those who would crush religious freedom our message is plain, you may jail your believers, you may close their churches, confiscate their Bibles and harass their rabbis and priests, but you will never destroy the love of God and freedom that burns in their hearts. They will triumph over you.

Malcolm Muggeridge the brilliant English commentator has written, "The most important happening in the world today is the resurgence of Christianity in the

Soviet Union, demonstrating that the whole effort sustained over 60 years to brainwash the Russian people into accepting materialism has been a fiasco." Think of it, the most awesome military machine in history, but it is no match for that one single man, hero, strong yet tender prince of peace, His name alone, Jesus, can lift our hearts, soothe our sorrows, heal our wounds and drive away our fears. He gave us love and forgiveness, taught us truth and left us hope. In the book of John is the promise that we all go by tells us that for God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son that whosoever believe it in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

With His message and with your conviction and commitment, we can still move mountains. We can work to reach our dreams and to make America a shining city on a hill. And before I say goodbye, I wanted to leave with you these words from an old Netherlands folk song, because they made me think of our meeting here today. We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing. We all do extol Thee, Thou leader triumphant and pray that Thou still our Defender wilt be. Let thy congregation escape tribulation. Thy name be ever praised. O Lord, make us free. To which I would only add a line from another song, America, America, God shed His grace on thee. Thank you again. Thank you.

Roger Marsh:

I'm Roger Marsh. And we hope that you have enjoyed this special president's day program. We've been listening to a wonder presentation delivered by the 40th president of the United States, Ronald Wilson Reagan. President Reagan was addressing a crowd at the 1983 National Religious Broadcasters convention. Dr. Dobson had the privilege of working with President Reagan for his two terms in office, Dr. Dobson was told by more than one person who was close to the president that President Reagan kept a Bible on his nightstand and read it regularly. If that is in fact true, we know that he meant every word that he spoke to that crowd of broadcasters that day.

Now, Dr. Dobson is always quick to point out that President Reagan was not a perfect man, but history tells us that Ronald Reagan proved to be one of the best presidents to ever lead our nation. Considering the turmoil and division within our country right now, Dr. Dobson wanted to share these words from President Reagan with you today. I hope you'll agree with Dr. Dobson that President Reagan's words are as relevant today as they were almost 40 years ago. Now, if you missed any of today's broadcast, just visit drjamesdobson.org/broadcast to listen to it in its entirety. While you're there, you can also request a CD copy to keep or to share. That web address once again is dramesdobson.org/broadcast or you can always give us a call at (877) 732-6825.

In fact, if you are in need of some prayer or encouragement, please give us a call today. These past few years have been hard on everyone and our team is available 24/7 to pray with you, to suggest resources or to just lend a listening ear. That number once again is (877) 732-6825. If you've been encouraged by the ministry of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, or maybe you are just now discovering the Family Talk program, will you prayerfully consider

supporting us financially. We are completely listener-supported and your gift of any amount will be greatly appreciated right now. In addition, all donations to the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute are tax deductible. If you're able to partner with us in this way, visit drjamesdobson.org, or give us a call at (877) 732-6825 to find out how easy it is to partner with us today.

Well, it is February and this month, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute is offering a special resource for all the moms and dads who listen to our program. I know firsthand that being a parent can be tough. You ever have days when you wish you could just sit down with a parenting expert, somebody who really understands what you're going through and knows just what advice and counsel to give? Well, good news, the parenting wisdom that you need is here in one complete volume, it's Dr. James Dobson's Parenting Collection. In this one volume set, you'll find three of Dr. Dobson's best-selling books, *including The New Dare to Discipline, The New Strong-Willed Child and Parenting Isn't for Cowards*.

Each of these works contains the straightforward, practical, biblical truths that you need to bring up the next generation of Christ followers. And Dr. James Dobson's Parenting Collection is yours, it's our way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. So, to request your copy today, visit [drjamesdobson.org/parenting collection](http://drjamesdobson.org/parenting-collection), that's [drjamesdobson.org/parenting collection](http://drjamesdobson.org/parenting-collection). Or give us a call at (877) 732-6825. Thanks again for listening to Family Talk. From all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, God's blessings to you and your family.

- Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi, everyone. This is Dr. Tim Clinton here for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. The news comes in all kinds of shapes, sizes and formats these days, but how do you cut through the noise and get to the heart of the matters that affect your family? Come to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and sign up for Dr. Dobson's monthly newsletter. You'll find clarity on tough issues, encouragement for your everyday life and trusted principles to help you build strong, healthy, connected families. Go to drjamesdobson.org, sign up today. That's drjamesdobson.org.
- Roger Marsh: Hey, everyone. Roger Marsh here. When you think about your family and where they will be when you're no longer living, are you worried? Are you confident? Are you hopeful? What kind of legacy are you leaving for your children and their children? Here at family talk? We're committed to helping you understand the legacy that you're leaving for your family. Join us today at drjamesdobson.org for helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. James Dobson himself. And remember your legacy matters.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi, everyone. Dr. Tim Clinton here for Family Talk. Are you on the go without much time to log in to all your social media pages? Twitter is a great way for staying informed on the things that matter most to you with just a quick look on your phone. Follow Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Receive great tips,

resources, information, inspiration that's important to you, in short, simple tweets. Again, that's Dr. James Dobson FT on Twitter.